



A SIMPLE, EFFICIENT AND SOLVENT FREE ONE POT SYNTHESIS OF 3, 3 DIHETEROAROMATIC OXINDOLE

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ABSTRACT

Formic acid catalyzed, single step and environmentally friendly process for synthesis of 3, 3- diheteroaromatic oxindole derivatives is described. This adopted protocol for Friedel- Crafts substitution reaction has the advantage of reusability of the catalyst, high yields and ease of separation of pure products.

Keywords: Isatin, indole, pyrrole, 3, 3- diheteroaromatic oxindole, catalysis.

INTRODUCTION

The woman contraceptive products available for many years are mostly based on Nonoxynol -9 (N-9)^{1, 2}, the use of N-9 may or may not meet further safety regulation. Several European nation have banned or restricted the use of N-9 and related compounds on the basis of health risks and potential environmental toxicity³. Isatin is known to possess a broad spectrum of bioactivity as many of which were assessed anti-HIV⁴, antiviral⁵, anti-tumor⁶, antifungal⁷, anti-angiogenic⁸, anticonvulsants⁹, anti-Parkinson's disease therapeutic¹⁰ and effective SARS coronavirus 3 CL protease inhibitor¹¹. Oxindole is an integral constituent of many natural products¹². The varied biological activities of oxindole derivatives have attracted the synthetic chemists to a number of synthetic strategies¹³. Especially, 3, 3- diheteroaromatic oxindoles have not been widely explored and the use of formic acid as a catalyst in the synthesis of 3, 3- di (indolyl) oxindoles and 3, 3- di (pyrrolyl) oxindole under solvent free conditions at room temperature has not been reported in literature. Recently, Interest in the field of organocatalysis has increased spectacularly in the last few years as a result of both the novelty of the concept and more importantly, the fact that the efficiency and selectivity of many organocatalytic reactions meet the standards of established organic reactions¹⁴. Formic acid is achieving enormous significance in organic synthesis of dihydropyrimidinones¹⁵. Considering the significance of all above discussed aspects and in continuation of our endeavor¹⁶ towards the development of eco-friendly synthetic protocols for the construction of bioactive molecules, it was thought worthwhile to develop a new, simple, greener and expeditious route for the synthesis of 3, 3- diheteroaromatic oxindole derivatives under solvent free conditions at room temperature using formic acid as an organocatalyst.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

All chemical were purchased from Merck, Aldrich and Rankem Chemical Companies and used without further purification. The uncorrected melting points of compounds were taken in an open capillary in a paraffin bath. The progresses of the reactions were monitored by TLC (Thin

Layer Chromatography). IR Spectra were recorded on Perkin-Elmer FT spectrophotometer in KBr disc. ¹H NMR Spectra were recorded on FT-NMR Spectrometer in CDCl₃ and DMSO as a solvent and chemical shift values are recorded in units δ (PPM) relative to tetramethylsilane (Me₄Si) as an internal standard.

General Procedure for the Synthesis of 3, 3- Diindolyl and 3, 3- dipyrrolyl oxindoles 3a-n

To the reaction mixture containing isatin **1** (1 mmol) indole or pyrrole **2** (1 mmol) and formic acid (15 mol %) were ground together in a mortar with pestle at room temperature for appropriate time in (1 min). After completion of reaction confirmed by TLC, the mixture was ice-water to furnish the crude products. The crude was further purified by column chromatography by using petroleum ether: ethyl acetate (9:1) eluent and get the corresponding of 3, 3- Diindolyl oxindoles (**3 a-m**) and 3, 3- dipyrrolyl oxindole (**3n**) were confirmed by comparison with authentic sample, elemental analysis and melting points.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As part of current studies on the design of new routes for the preparation of biologically active heterocyclic compounds¹⁷, we herein disclose a simple and convenient method for the efficient synthesis of 3, 3- diindolyl oxindoles and 3, 3- dipyrrolyl oxindole from isatin with substituted indoles or pyrrole in the presence of formic acid under solvent free condition (**Scheme 1, 2**).

The experiment was carried out simply by mixing isatin **1** and indole **2** in the presence of a catalytic amount (15 mol %) of formic acid under solvent free condition. The mixture was ground together in a mortar with a pestle at room temperature for short reaction time, and then purified by column chromatography, substituted oxindole derivatives were obtained in excellent yields. The result provided the incentive for further study of reaction with various other isatin derivatives and substituted indoles to further the corresponding 3, 3- diindolyl oxindoles and 3, 3-dipyrrolyl oxindole.

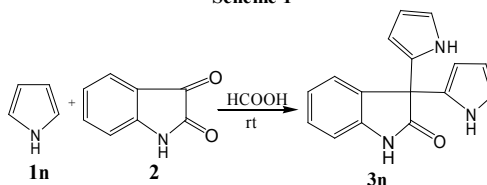
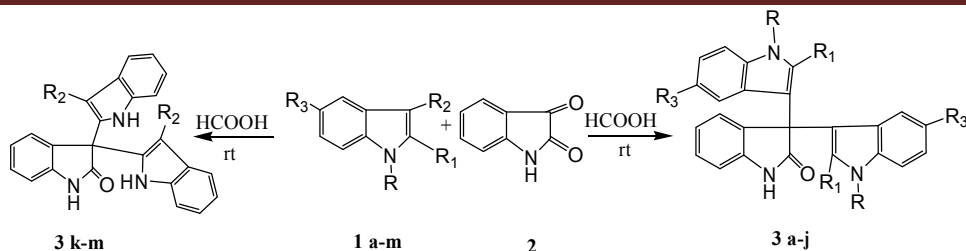


Table 1: Formic acid-catalyzed one pot synthesis of 3, 3'-diheteroaromatic oxindole derivatives under solvent-free conditions

Entry	R	R1	R2	R3	Product (3a-n)	Yield (%) ^{a,b}
1a	H	H	H	H	3a	97
1b	H	H	H	Br	3b	96
1c	H	Me	H	H	3c	96
1d	H	H	H	OMe	3d	90
1e	Me	H	H	H	3e	94
1f	H	COOH	H	H	3f	93
1g	H	H	H	Cl	3g	90
1h	H	H	H	F	3h	91
1i	H	H	H	I	3i	93
1j	H	H	H	Me	3j	97
1k	H	H	Me	H	3k	93
1l	H	H	Br	H	3l	90
1m	H	H	CH ₂ COOH	H	3m	95
1n	H	H	H	H	3n	93

^aYield of isolation pure products.^bProducts were characterized by IR, NMR, mass elemental analysis and comparison with authentic sample¹⁸

Accordingly, (10 mol %) of catalyst was sufficient to catalyze the reaction. A rate enhancement with high yield was observed when higher molar ratios of formic acid were used. However no product formation was observed in absence of formic acid. By getting this result, we have extended this protocol to a variety of substituted indoles summarized in (Table 1). 3- methyl indole (1k) 3-bromoindole (1l) and indole-3-acetic acid (1m) took longer time (5-6 min) for completion (Table 1). Furthermore, pyrrole (1n) also reacted efficiently with isatin under similar condition, to afford 3, 3'-dipyrryl-2-oxindole (3n) (Scheme 2, Table 1).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, formic acid has shown to be an excellent for one pot synthesis of large size 3, 3'-diheteroaromatic oxindoles under solvent free conditions. The protocol offers several advantages such as excellent % yields of product, short reaction time, simple work up procedure and easy isolation making it an important supplement to the existing methods.

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